

## Public Health Nurse Nikki Turner Helps Save a Life After Horrific Collision

From the time Nikki Turner was 7 or 8 years old, she knew she wanted to be a nurse. That is her calling, and she has never questioned it. She has been a registered nurse for approximately 20 years, including the past 10 years as a public health nurse at the Lee County Health Department. Saving lives is a part of her work, including a recent incident when she and other members of the Lee County Health Department clinic staff were called upon to resuscitate a 3-day-old baby who had stopped breathing.

Other events have confirmed her vocation. On a Saturday afternoon, Ms. Turner and her husband were returning to their home in Dadeville from Auburn when they topped a hill, saw a cloud of dust, and witnessed a car flipping before it came to rest upside down following a collision. After her husband pulled over, he started asking Nikki not to leave the truck due to oncoming traffic. But, already in response mode, Nikki threw open the door and rushed to help render aid to the victims.

It was a terrible sight; blood was everywhere and she knew immediately how serious the injuries were. It was frustrating because she could not remove one of the victims or even turn off the ignition. She was able to move one young man with a leg injury, but the most seriously injured victim was penned in his vehicle.

Extricating him wasn't easy—even when the "jaws of life" tool was employed to pull the victim out. The injured man also had open skull fractures and was not breathing. After assessing the situation, a bystander said his neighbor worked on the ambulance and he was going to call him. She insisted he tell the ambulance worker who wasn't even on the scene to call the Life Flight helicopter.

"If no one had been there, he wouldn't have lived," Ms. Turner said. Ms. Turner expressed gratitude to the other people who later stopped to help, including a young man with piercing blue eyes, who used his white shirt to apply pressure to Daniel's head wound, and a physician. The doctor said he was relieved that Ms. Turner already had the situation handled.



**Nikki Turner took heroic and awe-inspiring actions to save injured wreck victims.**

"I wasn't going to let someone's baby boy die," she explained. The theory of six or fewer degrees of separation was proven true in this situation. A good friend of the young man's parents is Marcy Gilder, a former health department employee who actually hired Nikki Turner in Lee County. Nikki was able to speak with the young man's mother and learned his name is Daniel.

Ms. Gilder explained, "Nikki is truly an angel. She established his breathing, attempted to stop the bleeding, and never left Daniel's side. Through Nikki's efforts and insisting that Life Flight be called, Daniel is now alive."

Daniel has a master's degree in microbiology and is a musician who was on his way to a performance when the collision occurred.

The father of the severely injured young man, wanted to make sure Ms. Turner received proper recognition for being a Good Samaritan. He said, "There is no doubt in my mind that Nikki saved my son's life. She made every effort she could, took command and saved him. We are very fortunate."

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# Southeast Regional Pilot Acute Stroke System Activated

Patients in 18 southeast Alabama counties now enjoy the benefits of the Southeast Regional Pilot Acute Stroke System (SRPASS). The system was activated Aug. 26.

“Providing access to rapid stroke treatment within the first few hours of the onset of symptoms is vitally important in ensuring good patient outcomes,” said Dr. Donald Williamson, state health officer. “We applaud our partners for working to establish a system that will dramatically improve the quality of care stroke patients can receive by saving precious time and delivering expert neurologic care.”

Stroke is the leading cause of serious long-term disability and the fourth leading cause of death in the United States. Patients who are having a stroke need to be quickly evaluated at a hospital, just like patients who are having a heart attack.

“Ischemic strokes, which are the most common type of strokes, can sometimes be treated and completely reversed by use of a ‘clotbuster’ drug called thrombolytic agent tissue plasminogen activator or ‘tPA,’” Dr. Sarah Nafziger, assistant state EMS medical director, explained. “Because of the need for urgency in treatment with tPA, these patients must be rapidly transported to a hospital capable of immediately performing a rapid exam to determine the type of stroke they are experiencing, and then treated with tPA when appropriate.”

Dr. John Campbell, medical director for stroke and trauma system development, Southeast Alabama EMS Region, said, “The Health Department has identified a network of hospitals with the commitment and the resources to care for stroke patients. This network will work with EMS agencies, as well as the Alabama Trauma Communications Center (ATCC), using an organized plan to route patients with signs of stroke to the closest hospital that is ready to care for them. The system will be constantly monitored to correct, improve and validate the quality of care provided.”

Operation of the stroke system will be similar to the Alabama Trauma System, which relies on voluntary participation by hospitals. Hospitals have been inspected



**Shown are, left to right, front row, Joe Acker, executive director, Birmingham Regional Emergency Medical Services System; Dr. Sarah Nafziger, Assistant State EMS Director; Denise Louthain, Southeast Region director; second row, Dennis Blair, Office of EMS director; Dr. John Campbell, Medical Director for Stroke and Trauma System Development, Southeast Alabama EMS Region; Choona Lang, State Trauma/Stroke Program administrator; Dr. Donald Williamson, State Health Officer; and Dr. Stephen Suggs, Medical Director, Primary Stroke Center, Baptist Medical Center South, Montgomery.**

and designated for the level of services they can provide, and each hospital will self-determine when it is available to take a stroke patient. Stroke system patient routing will be coordinated by a single high-tech communication center, the ATCC, which coordinates patient transport to the appropriate facility and facilitates transfer of patients that require a higher level of care after initial treatment.

The SRPASS relies heavily on the resources and participation of hospitals, emergency medical service personnel, and coordination by the ATCC. After the pilot program has been initiated, ADPH plans to start rolling out a statewide stroke system of care that will help ensure that patients experiencing stroke symptoms are transported to the closest hospital with the appropriate resources to care for them.

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## Alabama Department of Public Health

### Mission

To serve the people of Alabama by assuring conditions in which they can be healthy.

### Value Statement

The purpose of the Alabama Department of Public Health is to provide caring, high quality and professional services for the improvement and protection of the public's health through disease prevention and the assurance of public health services to resident and transient populations of the state regardless of social circumstances or the ability to pay.

The Department of Public Health works closely with the community to preserve and protect the public's health and to provide caring quality services.

## Alabama's Health

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# Healthiest Bureau Challenge Winners Announced

For the past few months RSA Tower, state lab, and warehouse employees in Montgomery have had a fun, friendly competition in the Healthiest Bureau Challenge which has tracked wellness activities.

Employees could accumulate wellness points with activities such as taking health screenings, meeting with an ADPH health coach, attending lunch-and-learn programs, eating fruits and vegetables, participating in physical activities, getting a flu shot, and not smoking or making a pledge to stop smoking. Individuals also joined the Healthy Steps Walking Club, which promotes walking as a main source of physical activities. Teams earned points and accumulated miles by walking.

Employees could redeem points to earn individual incentive prizes along their journeys and by submitting their forms monthly. Incentive items included three-piece barbecue grill sets, large exercise balls, calorie counting jump ropes, three-section containers with utensils, resistance bands, levels with toolkit, T-shirts and other items.

Bureaus and offices were compared using submitted log forms from individuals within each bureau.



**Employees of the Office of Emergency Medical Services were recognized for their enthusiasm in the competition. Shown, left to right, are Dennis Blair, Leslie Morgan, Katherine Hert, Stephen Wilson, Crystal Fountain and Gary Mackey.**

Recognized at the Central Office Staff Meeting on Sept. 5 were the following:

**First Place: Bureau of Information Technology**

**Second Place: Bureau of Children's Health Insurance**

**Most Enthusiastic Employee Participation:  
Office of Emergency Medical Services**

"We appreciate and congratulate all bureaus and individuals who participated in the challenge," said coordinator Teresa Fair of the Bureau of Nutrition and Physical Activity. "Let's continue on our wellness path, and remember our slogan: 'Wellness is a Lifestyle!'"

## Benefits of Wellness

- Mood Boosts
- Improved Work Performance
- Mental Sharpness
- Increased Productivity
- Decreased Doctor Bills
- Stress Release
- Energy!



**Taking a morning walk are employees of the Bureau of Information Technology. The bureau was awarded first place in the Healthiest Bureau Challenge. Shown, left to right, are Jay Taylor, Roger Robinson, Jane McMunn, Ben McGhee and coordinator Teresa Fair.**

## Office of Women's Health WHI-FI Program Featured

The Your Health feature on ABC 33/40 in Birmingham that aired June 14 featured activities of the Women's Health Information For the Incarcerated (WHI-FI) program conducted by the Office of Women's Health (OWH).

News anchor Linda Mays, a member of the OWH steering committee, interviewed director Jessica Hardy for the segment about the reentry and pre-release programs offered to offenders at Alabama's women's prison facilities. Modules on several topics focus on healthy lifestyles after prison.

WHI-FI is a joint collaborative venture between Aid to Inmate Mothers (AIM) and the OWH. Since 2008 WHI-FI has served more than 100 women per month with regular programs.

The purpose of WHI-FI is to increase awareness about women's health, foster healthy lifestyles prior to and after release, and assist with linkages to public health services in the community.

# EP Team Members and County Environmentalists Receive Water Filtration Training

Area emergency preparedness team members and county environmentalists are better prepared to deal with water disruptions and emergencies in their areas thanks to water filtration training they received Aug. 6 in Montgomery.

The Center for Emergency Preparedness has obtained improved equipment to filter water in the event of natural disasters such as floods and hurricanes as well as disruptions that occur from mechanical factors such as water main breaks and power outages. Specialists from the manufacturer, First Water, Inc., demonstrated how the equipment is used.

Tim Hatch, MPA, REHS, Planning and Logistics Director, said, "We're proud of this new equipment with its high capacity, speed and versatility."

Sometimes water filtration systems are needed because water is contaminated, and other times they are used when there is a total water outage. In the winter of 2009, municipal water supplies in three west Alabama communities were depleted during abnormally cold weather after customers left their faucets dripping to prevent pipes from breaking.

To meet critical needs, ADPH's water plan employed the use of a mobile trailer to move the equipment wherever it was needed. Local fire department tankers were deployed to pump water from lakes and rivers so that the public health workforce could filter and bottle the water for the families in need. The new system utilizes individual 1.6 gallon aqua bag containers that can be stored easily and then filled on-site.

The new system, the FW-1200-M, filters up to 1,200 gallons per hour. It fits in an SUV, minivan or pickup truck. Other advantages are that its wheeled frame can be moved with one hand and it hooks up to standard hose bibs or an external hose. Additional features are that the on-board pump pulls water from an un-usable water main, SupplyStation™, or virtually any salt-free water source. Its specially designed, high strength pump works efficiently with intermittent and continually cycling "gray power" from generators, and it is AC powered.

Hatch emphasized the importance of practicing the operation of the new equipment. Refresher training was also given on the briefcase-sized FW-60, FW720 and the Water Recycler trailer. Hatch also reminded staff members that they need to conduct routine maintenance

to identify and replace expired items and to make sure all equipment is functional.

"If you're deployed, we don't want to keep the public waiting for their water because you have a flat tire or you failed to bring all your equipment with you," Hatch reminded attendees. "Emergency planning is an ongoing process."



**Demonstrating the system is Brandon Harper, Technical Trainer at First Water Inc.**



**Environmentalists from county health departments and area emergency preparedness teams receive water filtration training.**



**The new equipment offers high capacity, speed and versatility to meet critical needs.**

# Employees Earn Doctorate of Nursing Practice Degrees

**M**elanie Rightmyer, age 8, never thought the Thanksgiving meal would include her annual flu shot. Nevertheless, a filled syringe was a natural part of the place setting when visiting her grandmother, the county public health nurse.

Melanie's ambition to follow in her grandmother's footsteps began in the emergency room in one of Kentucky's critical access hospitals in 1987. She earned her Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing, joined the U.S. Air Force, and was stationed at Maxwell Air Force Base in 1993.

A year later, her husband Joe finished his Associate of Science degree in Nursing at which time Melanie told him, "You're not a real nurse until you get your Bachelor's." Joe didn't comment, but continued his education earning his Master of Science in Nursing, specializing as a Family Nurse Practitioner in August 2001, at which time he told Melanie again, "You're not a real nurse until you get your Master's."

Upon finishing her Master's degree in 2010, Melanie announced that she was going to continue school for the Doctorate of Nursing Practice (DNP) degree. Not wanting to be outdone, Joe decided to just complete this degree with her and on May 3, 2013, husband-and-wife team Joe and Melanie Rightmyer each received their DNP degrees from the University of Alabama Capstone College of Nursing.

Joe is a nurse practitioner in Public Health Area 8 and Melanie is a health systems program manager directing cardiovascular activities in the Bureau of Health Promotion and Chronic Disease.

## Stroke system, continued from page 2

Dr. Stephen Suggs, medical director of the Primary Stroke Center at Baptist Medical Center South in Montgomery, said the system will help minimize death and disability from stroke. "The implementation of SRPASS will have a significant impact on stroke outcomes in our region and will allow us to give each stroke victim an opportunity for the best possible recovery."

This stroke system operates in Autauga, Barbour, Bullock, Butler, Coffee, Covington, Crenshaw, Dale, Elmore, Geneva, Henry, Houston, Lee, Lowndes, Macon, Montgomery, Pike and Russell counties.

These are the SRPASS stroke hospitals and their designation levels. A Level II designation means a hospital can accept more complex cases than a Level III hospital.

Congratulations to the Rightmyers and all of the other DNP graduates employed with the department. The list of known DNPs is as follows:

Kibbra Cunningham, Etowah County Health Department  
Coretta Cutts, Jefferson County Department of Health  
Latoya Davis, Tuscaloosa County Health Department  
Angela Dubose, Tuscaloosa County Health Department  
Krysta Hood, Tuscaloosa County Health Department  
Cynthia Lewis, Tuscaloosa County Health Department  
Pamela Moody, Tuscaloosa County Health Department  
Arlinda Wormely, St. Clair County Health Department



**Husband-and-wife team Joe and Melanie Rightmyer are shown in cap and gown after receiving their Doctor of Nursing Practice degrees from the University of Alabama Capstone College of Nursing.**

Andalusia Regional Hospital, Level III  
Baptist Medical Center East, Level III  
Baptist Medical Center South, Level II  
Community Hospital, Level III  
Dale Medical Center, Level III  
East Alabama Medical Center, Level III  
Flowers Hospital, Level II  
Jackson Hospital, Level II  
Medical Center Barbour, III  
Medical Center Enterprise, III  
Mizell Memorial Hospital, Level III  
Prattville Baptist Hospital, Level III  
Southeast Alabama Medical Center, Level II  
Troy Regional Medical Center, Level III  
Wiregrass Medical Center, Level III

# March of Dimes Recognizes State Health Officer for Leadership in Newborn Screening

The March of Dimes recognized State Health Officer Dr. Donald Williamson on Sept. 18 for his leadership in newborn screening. Alabama newborns are screened for 30 primary treatable metabolic and functional disorders as recommended by the U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services and endorsed by the March of Dimes and the American Academy of Pediatrics.

While most of the disorders are rare, they are usually serious. Some may be life threatening; others may slow down a baby's physical development or cause mental retardation or other problems if left undetected and untreated. On June 21, Alabama added a screening test for Critical Congenital Heart Disease (CCHD), bringing the total number of primary screening tests to 30.

"The March of Dimes applauds Dr. Williamson for his unwavering commitment to newborn screening," said Camille A. Epps, March of Dimes state director. "Screening for treatable conditions immediately after birth can mean the difference between a healthy life or a severe disability or even death for a newborn. Tragedy can be avoided by quickly identifying a problem and providing the necessary medical treatment—which brings immeasurable relief to the families of almost 60,000 babies born in Alabama every year."

Screening of infants by measuring blood oxygen saturation using pulse oximetry technology can identify specific structural heart defects and prevent delayed diagnosis and treatment. Each birthing facility in the state has implemented screening for CCHD in its newborn nursery and reports failed screening results to the department. The screening is painless and noninvasive and targets seven specific and five secondary cardiac anomalies.

Ten Alabama newborns have been identified with congenital heart defects that might have gone undetected had they not had CCHD screening that began in April 2012 on a voluntary basis. As a result, these infants have been afforded access to diagnostic evaluation through pediatric specialists to receive specialized care and treatment that could prevent death or disability.

"Our success in implementing newborn screening for CCHD has been made possible thanks to the collaboration of many stakeholders whose expertise is crucial to the process," Dr. Williamson said. "I am pleased to accept this recognition from the March of Dimes on behalf of the members of the

Newborn Screening Advisory Council, the CCHD Workgroup, the Alabama Hospital Association, parent advocates, the Bureau of Family Health Services and others."

The Alabama Newborn Screening Program began the process to screen for CCHD in September 2011. The CCHD workgroup convened in November and December 2011 to create a standard protocol for pulse oximetry screening in Alabama's well baby nurseries.

In August 2012, just four months after screening began, an infant was identified with CCHD. After one year of voluntary screening, the Alabama Board of Health Administrative Code was amended to include CCHD. Alabama became the 22nd state to add CCHD to the state screening panel, according to the March of Dimes.

Newborn screening has been named one of the top public health achievements of the 20th century. Alabama remains ahead of the national average in screening its newborns. During 2012, 162 infants were identified with a primary newborn screening condition. Alabama screens for 30 primary disorders and over 40 total disorders, including secondary conditions. Most affected babies have the opportunity to grow up healthy and develop normally through a simple blood screen that saves babies from death or disability.



**A presentation and news conference on Sept. 18 celebrated newborn screening in Alabama. Pictured, left to right, are Camille A. Epps, state director, March of Dimes; Robin A. Collins, state director of program services for the March of Dimes; Mark Miller, parent advocate; and Cindy Ashley, Alabama Newborn Screening Program director.**

# Department Celebrates Men's Health, with Washington County Winning Showdown Award

Wearing blue for Men's Health during June has become a tradition in public health departments across the state in the past five years. The purpose of Men's Health Month is to heighten awareness of preventable health problems and encourage early detection and treatment of disease among men and boys.

Drew Nelson, Men's Health Committee chairman, said, "I would like to express my appreciation to all the staff who promote men's health not only during June, but year around. It is a cause that we must continue to raise awareness as most men don't realize the impact their health plays on their future and the future of their families. It is evident that the level of participation grows each year, and selecting a single county winner was very difficult."

To help focus attention on men's health at the state level, Gov. Robert Bentley declared June 11 through 17 as Men's Health Week in Alabama. Members of the Men's Health Committee presented men's health materials at two events in Montgomery and appeared on television interview programs.

The 2013 Men's Health Symposium sponsored by the department was held June 12 on the Alabama State University campus. At the free symposium for men, Dr. Brian Richardson, urologist at Jackson Hospital, Dr. Valda Montgomery, Associate Professor of Physical Therapy at Alabama State University, and Bernard Linzy of the STD Division addressed topics including heart disease and stroke risk factors, testicular and prostate cancer prevention and treatment, healthy lifestyle choices, and utilization of social networks to promote healthy living.

County health department employees got in the spirit, frequently wearing blue ribbons and T-shirts, creating bulletin boards and hosting presentations. Outreach efforts were extensive for the 2013 Men's Health County Showdown Award winner, Washington County Health Department.

Washington County team leaders Deborah Leigh Dixon and Brittany Tindle set up a booth and presented information regarding men's health at the annual golf tournament in Chatom. They distributed pamphlets, water bottles with labels listing recommended screenings for men, free sunscreen and insect repellent to 250 men. Approximately 500 information packets also reached the local community.

Chatom Mayor Harold Crouch declared June as Men's Health Month, the local newspaper ran an advertisement presenting men's health information; a bulletin board was created and placed in the lobby of the local health



**Public Health Area 9 Administrator Ricky Elliott, left, is shown accepting the Men's Health County Showdown Award on behalf of the Washington County Health Department from Drew Nelson.**

department; and the electronic sign outside the health department displayed men's health month information. All employees ordered T-shirts with men's health logos and they wore them every Friday during the month of June. Sponsors reported that the shirts helped "open the door for more outreach to occur."

Other activities reported included the following:

**Butler** County employees wore blue ribbons throughout the month to promote awareness. On the day following Wear Blue Day, 138 men were screened for prostate cancer. The event was advertised on the department's electronic sign, ADPH website, fliers posted around the county, local radio stations and local newspapers. A special Saturday community outreach event was held at an auto parts shop parking lot. In addition to providing health information, staff grilled food and offered it at no charge for those attending.

**Escambia** County commissioners proclaimed Men's Health Week, Wear Blue Day was a major success, and almost 40 people attended a men's health summit in conjunction with the Coalition for a Healthier Escambia County.

In **Monroe** County, a proclamation signed by the mayor of Monroeville was presented at the city council meeting and was placed in the newspaper and on local radio stations.

All five mayors in **Clarke** County signed proclamations of the week, and photos were placed in the local newspaper.

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## Commendations

If you would like to praise employees for their accomplishments, send letters of commendation to the State Health Officer or the employee's supervisor and a copy by e-mail to [Arrol.Sheehan@adph.state.al.us](mailto:Arrol.Sheehan@adph.state.al.us) for inclusion in this list. Four items are needed: the employee's name, work unit, name of the person making the commendation, and his or her city and state.

### Linda Bolding

Center for Health Statistics  
from Eulis S. Atkins  
Rome, Ga.

from Michael Bowman  
Bloomfield Hills, Mich.

from Betty J. Hester  
Fallon, Nev.

### Janice Cook

### Chuck Lail

Office of Primary Care and  
Rural Health  
from June Wang  
Huntsville, Ala.

### Sandra Daniels

Center for Health Statistics  
from Trish Turney  
Montgomery, Ala.

### Casandra Henderson

Center for Health Statistics  
from Carneal J. Williams  
Cibolo, Texas

### Darwina Johnson and LCMS Staff

Bureau of Information  
Technology  
Samarria M. Dunson  
Montgomery, Ala.

### Sandra Levert

Center for Health Statistics  
from Natasha McKenzie  
Opelika, Ala.

### Kent "Oley" Olesen

### Kent Speigner

Center for Emergency  
Preparedness  
from Jane Ellen Taylor  
Montgomery, Ala.

## Retirees

The following departmental employees have retired recently.

### July

### Antoinette Bourke

Office of Facilities Management

### Glendie Burks

Financial Services

### Anita Cowden

Bureau of Family Health Services

### Candace Hulsey

Bureau of Home & Community Services

### Brenda Jackson-Stackhouse

Coffee County Health Department

### Patricia Schloeder

Montgomery County Health  
Department

### Priscilla Vinson

Center for Health Statistics

### Carrie Warren

Lawrence County Health Department

### August

### Lynda Brooks

Conecuh County Health Department

### Nancy Esham

Baldwin County Health Department

### Mary Hamilton

Limestone County Health Department

### Joyce Hinshaw

Jackson County Health Department

### Ann Johnson

Bureau of Clinical Laboratories

### Susan Reed

Bureau of Health Provider Standards

### Alice Romo

Winston County Health Department

### Paul Worthington

Hale County Health Department

## Stay Informed with the ADPH Mobile App

Do you want to stay up to date on breaking public health alerts and news, including events and activities? Just download the Alabama Department of Public Health app on your mobile device. The department launched the application to make it easier for the public to access health information.

The app connects all ADPH social media accounts—Facebook, Twitter and YouTube—in one place. In addition to news releases, the app connects the user to notices and events, messages from the state health officer, Alabama Public Health Training Network messages and program information.

"We can reach people wherever they are quickly and easily," Jim McVay, Dr.P.A., director of the Bureau of Health Promotion and Chronic Disease, said. "There are so many potential uses. The app can be a crucial tool in informing the public during natural or man-made disasters."

The Alabama Department of Public Health mobile app is available for downloading at no charge. The app requires Android 2.2 or later and iPhone iOS5 or later on

mobile devices such as smart phones and iPads.

"The app furthers the Digital Media Branch's goal of improving the timeliness of information sharing from the website, as well as increasing the frequency of messages delivered to the public," Jennifer Sumner, acting branch director, said.

News media from around the country have shown interest in the Department's new app, including TIME.com.

For more information contact Mrs. Sumner at (334) 206-7988 or visit [adph.org](http://adph.org).



**Jennifer Sumner of the Digital Media Branch helped to launch the app which makes information more readily accessible.**



**Coworkers honored Brenda Anderson with a reception Sept. 11 upon her retirement from the Office of Financial Services, Cost Accounting, after more than 30 years of service.**



**State Health Officer Dr. Donald Williamson presents a certificate to Carolyn Battle, WIC director, on her retirement effective Oct. 1 with 28 years of service.**



**Mim Gaines, director of the Nutrition and Physical Activity Division, was honored with a retirement party Sept. 20. She had 25 years of service.**



**Licensure and Certification Surveyor Richard E. Garnett, R.N., retired effective Sept. 1 after 25 years of service. Dr. Tom Geary, bureau director and medical director of the Bureau of Health Provider Standards, right, wishes him well.**



**Administrative Support Assistant Paula Stinchcomb retired July 1 from the Bureau of Communicable Disease with more than 38 years of state service.**



**Colleagues honored Licensure and Certification Supervisor Loula B. Walker, R.N., with a reception upon her retirement, effective Sept. 1. She is shown with Dr. Tom Geary.**

## Breastfeeding Facts

- Breast milk is the ideal food for infants. It is the only food needed for about the first six months.
- Breast milk provides the most complete nutrition and special protective factors.
- Breast milk changes to meet a baby's growth and nutritional needs.
- Even though breastfeeding is natural, a mother and baby must learn how to breastfeed.

## Nikki Turner, continued from page 1

Recovery from such serious head trauma is slow; rehabilitation for the young man is expected to take longer than a year. But his family is so grateful to have him.

Heroic stories of courage and caring such as Nikki's are an inspiration to others; they are not told in any way to seek recognition or fame. This story was brought to our attention only because Ms. Gilder, the friend of the family who had worked with Ms. Turner, let us know Nikki had rushed in to help save lives, coincidentally, one of lives saved was the son of her good friends.

## **Men's Health, continued from page 7**

A summer college intern completed a nutrition presentation for health department employees encouraging healthy lifestyle choices and emphasizing men's health awareness in **Baldwin** County.

Men's Health Tune-Ups which compared the need for men's health checkups and screenings with vehicle tune-ups were highlighted on bulletin boards in **Covington** County. Staff members also wore blue ribbons during the month of June.

Social workers in Butler and Covington counties teamed up to complete a bulletin board with men's health awareness information in **Concuh** County.

**Limestone** County staff displayed men's health information and promoted free prostate cancer screening at the Madison County Health Department and the entire office staff wore blue ribbons in honor of Men's Health Week.

**Cullman** County Health Department staff created and displayed a men's health bulletin board which focused on healthy lifestyle, yearly checkups and adequate nutrition.

**Montgomery** County's men's health initiative included the presentation of a movie-type documentary on men's health produced by Javette Jones-Gadson which was emailed to all Public Health Area 8 employees.

Public Health Area 6 documented its enthusiastic participation in Men's Health Month with staff members from **Calhoun, Chambers, Clay, Talladega, Tallapoosa** counties and the area office wearing blue. Displays touting "tools for a healthy man" were set up.

The **Etowah** County Health Department provided a toolkit for men's health. Information was provided on the following: diet and exercise, heart disease, cholesterol, stroke, blood pressure, smoking, PAD, recipes for a healthy

heart, regular checkups with PMD, and the importance of testicular self-examinations. Free blood pressure checks were offered on June 12 and staff wore blue in honor of men's health on June 13. One man (and his young son) was given a door prize.

**Marshall** County staff helped men understand prostate cancer by using a prostate cancer model for visualization and offered blood pressure screenings when possible. The staff set up a display at the entrance, had pamphlets regarding nutrition, STDs, testicular self-examinations and promoted an upcoming free prostate cancer screening event.

Televisions in the lobby of the **Madison** County Health Department played a PowerPoint video on men's health concerns, and two staff members spoke about men's health to every man who walked through the door. Staff also provided information packets to all patients who came through the health department during the Men's Health Week and set up a display in the front lobby with men's health information for the entire month. Not only did staff provide information, they provided blood pressure checks and spoke to men at length about prostate health and encouraged them to participate in the prostate screening to be held on July 23. Approximately 180 men were screened during the six-hour clinic. The PowerPoint was made by local staff and covered heart health, stroke, nutrition, breast cancer in men, testicular cancer, prostate cancer and exercise.

For Men's Health Week, **Jackson** County Health Department employees all wore blue ribbons. A lobby display featured information on men's health from diet and salt intake, to exercise, blood pressure, heart health, immunizations and smoking.

The **Lawrence** County Health Department set up a men's health screening educational poster in the waiting room, and men who attended the clinic were given information.



**County health departments promoted men's health by holding many health promotion events during June.**

# Department Reaches Goal of ‘Substantial Compliance’ with New HIPAA Regulations

Congratulations to over 3,500 departmental employees across the state for completing the 2013 HIPAA Privacy and Security Training on or before Sept. 23, 2013. A compliance effort of this magnitude is unprecedented and is an inspiring demonstration of what our departmental staff can achieve by working together as a TEAM.

The Director of the Health and Human Services Office for Civil Rights, Leon Rodriguez, referred to these new HIPAA regulations as “the most sweeping changes to HIPAA Privacy and Security Rules since they were first implemented.” HIPAA-covered entities and business associates generally had six months to become compliant with the new regulations. Therefore, the department wasted no time readying itself for this compliance effort. In order to attain and maintain regulatory compliance, the department’s Privacy Officer, Samarria Dunson, focused on creating a “Culture of Compliance.” The effort began by receiving overwhelming support from State Health Officer Dr. Donald E. Williamson, Deputy Director for Medical Affairs Dr. Tom Miller, Deputy Director for Program Operations Michele Jones and Public Health Administrative Officer Grover Wedgeworth.

Then the department’s area administrators and bureau directors stepped up to create a “campaign” focused on these new regulations. Finally, Risk Management Committee members were major contributors to the effort by assisting with drafting policies and providing valuable, realistic insight.



**Darwina Johnson, Cheryl Perez, Valerie Cochran, Debra Thrash and Samarria Dunson worked to ensure statewide departmental compliance with 2013 HIPAA regulations.**

To help understand the new policy, the department’s Video Communications and Distance Learning Division was elicited, along with several talented staff members, to produce a web-based training video which was made available for all employees to view in LCMS. Darwina Johnson of the Bureau of Information Technology used her knowledge and leadership to move the project forward. All staff authorized to access protected health information (PHI) and electronic protected health information (e-PHI) were educated on the following:

- Handling patient/client PHI both in paper and electronic form
- Reporting breaches of confidentiality
- Minimizing introduction of malicious computer software
- Using proper passwords and system user names
- Understanding the consequences of not following the regulations

## HIPAA regulations

Although the subject matter might have seemed dry, Ms. Dunson was candid about the anticipated reaction of employees. The webcast tapped the power of humor and frequent quizzes. It also featured skits starring Central Office employees Barbara Davis, Carol Heier, William Kennedy and Kristie Steyer to illustrate responsibilities and patient/client rights. The training described the “minimum necessary rule” and exceptions to it, and the uses and disclosure of PHI with regard to staff access.

The role of the HIPAA Security Officer Cheryl Perez was also discussed, along with topics such as the use of mobile devices, including cell phones, laptops, flash drives, fax procedures, emailing, texting and social media.

LCMS staff members Phyllis Cleveland, Robbin Fuqua, Jessica Jones and Patronya Sanks were integrally involved in the project.

Risk Management Committee members include: Cathy Caldwell, Renae Carpenter, Valerie Cochran, Glenda Harris, Debbie Jones, Cheryl Perez, Deena Strickland, Debra Thrash and Pam Williams.

For more information and to make reports, contact Privacy Officer Samarria Dunson, Office of General Counsel, at (334) 206-5209, Samarria.Dunson@adph.state.al.us, or Security Officer Perez, Bureau of Information Technology, (334) 206-5064, Cheryl.Perez@adph.state.al.us.



# Environmental Services Q and A

The Bureau of Environmental Services responds to a variety of questions from the public, such as the following:

**QUESTION:** Is there any rule which would restrict a food establishment owner from growing his or her own produce and using it in the restaurant?

**RESPONSE:** There is not a rule in the Food Code that restricts a food establishment owner from growing his or her own produce and using it in the establishment with the exception of bean sprouts. Bean sprouts have been linked to several foodborne outbreaks and sprouting beans for use in a restaurant requires an additional process plan that has to be approved by the regulatory authority.

It's not especially unusual for a chef to grow his or her own herbs at the restaurant. With that said, it's the responsibility of the person growing the produce to make certain appropriate fertilizers and pesticides are used correctly if applied.

## Calendar of Events



**October 22**  
The Affordable Care Act:  
Mandates, Exchanges,  
Medicaid...and All That,  
noon-1:30 p.m.



**October 29**  
ADPH Pap Smear Protocol  
Update, 8:30-10 a.m.  
For more information contact  
Laurie Stout, (334) 206-2905.



**November 14**  
Newborn Screening Follow-up:  
Preventing Morbidity and  
Mortality in Children with  
Congenital Hypothyroidism  
and Congenital Adrenal  
Hyperplasia, 2-3 p.m.  
For more information  
contact Rachel Montgomery,  
(334) 206-5955.



**November 15**  
ADPH Nurse Practitioner  
Inservice, 9-11 a.m.  
For more information contact  
Gabi Darch, (334) 737-2961.